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DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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BUFFALO BILL, MULTI-STORIED BORDER KING

Cont. from the December issue, Part 3

by J. Edward Leithead

THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

Best of Old-time Weeklies About the Indian-fighting West

In 1901, Street & Smith issued the first number of The Buffalo Bill Stories, a colored cover weekly. It was the first time that a library had been devoted exclusively to the adventures of Colonel Cody, whose very appearance was an inspiration to writers of Western tales.

#1 of the Buffalo Bill Stories was entitled, "Buffalo Bill, the Border King. A Story of Daring Deeds." It is not a reprint of either the original "Buffalo Bill, the King of Border Men" or Log Cabin Library #152, "Buffalo Bill, the Border King"; but in part it is the same story published as #1 of the Far West Library, a 15-cent series in book format which came out later, same title. It reads more like a Buntline tale than one by Ingraham, though it may not have been written by either of them.

#2 of the Buffalo Bill Stories was "Buffalo Bill's Best Shot. A Story of Wild West Adventure," and #3 was "Buffalo Bill's Victory. A Story of Tangled Trails." These are reprints of two New York Weekly-Log Cabin Library stories, with corresponding titles, by Ned Buntline. Some cutting was necessary to bring them within the word length required by the new weekly.

For over one hundred issues, this weekly reprinted Buffalo Bill tales

from Log Cabin, Beadle's Dime and Half-Dime Libraries. It also reprinted two Wild Bill stories from Beadle's Dime, #175, "Wild Bill's Trump Card" and #189, "Wild Bill's Gold Trail," as #132 to 134 inclusive of the Stories, substituting Cody's name for Hickok's in title and text. In fact, practically all the Buffalo Bill novels published by Beadle & Adams were used to launch the long-lived Buffalo Bill Stories, which, according to the masthead, was "The Only Publication Authorized by Hon. W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill)." Later on this was changed to read, "A Weekly Publication Devoted to Border Life," and at another time, "A Weekly Publication Devoted to Border History."

In reprinting tales from Beadle's Dime Library it was necessary, because of their length, 50,000 words or more, to run one of them in two consecutive issues of the Stories. This also applied to Log Cabin Library tales. But the Beadle's Half-Dimes, being shorter, ran in single issues, many retaining the titles under which Beadle & Adams had first published them. For example, #79 of the Buffalo Bill Stories was "Buffalo Bill's Decoy Boys," the same title and the same story issued in Beadle's Half-Dime #1000, in 1896. Buffalo Bill Stories #80, "Buffalo Bill's Sure Shots," was a reprint of the identical story and title in Half-Dime #1007. Here are a few more, same title, same story as originally gotten out by Beadle: Buffalo Bill Stories #81, "Buffalo Bill's Texan Team," #98 "Buffalo Bill's Rush Ride," #103 "Buffalo Bill's Pony Patrol," #108 "Buffalo Bill's Drop," #109 "Buffalo Bill's Lasso-throwers." All the

above were by Col. Ingraham.

Two exceptionally good tales, based upon the activities of the Sioux "Ghost Dancers" and the fight at Wounded Knee Creek, appeared in #45, "Buffalo Bill in the Bad Lands" and #46, "Buffalo Bill's Trail of the Ghost Dancers." Buffalo Bill, White Beaver, Yankton Charley and Buckskin Jack Russell are the chief characters in these yarns, which were published as one long story in Log Cabin #103, "Buffalo Bill at Wounded Knee," by Robert Russell, reprinted as #388, and may have been serialized before it saw publication in that library. It's an historical fact that Cody was on the scene of this last big Indian uprising, 1890-91, due to the "Messiah craze." His purpose was to take Sitting Bull, who had traveled with his show after the Custer battle and gotten considerable publicity. Bull, however, was killed during the attempt of his warriors to rescue him from Indian police, who had arrested the medicine man before he could flee from the reservation to the Bad Lands camps.

Colonel Ingraham wrote some new stories for the series, scattered among the reprints above #100. Just how many were the work of Ingraham, who died in 1904, it is difficult to tell. But, unless his style of writing changed, there was another, unidentified author who did quite a few new yarns between #100 and #150. #105, "Buffalo Bill's Ordeal of Fire," #106, "Buffalo Bill on a Renegade's Trail" and #107 "Buffalo Bill's Balloon Trip," are not in Ingraham's style, but the ensuing dozen numbers or so bear the impress of his prolific pen, some of them undoubtedly reprints from Beadle libraries.

The work of the unnamed author—it may have been St. George Rathborne—is again apparent in #145, "Buffalo Bill's Feather-weight," and goes on for some time. In fact, the stories from #145 onward were all new until the weekly, years later, reached #552. An outstanding story by this writer is #147, "Buffalo Bill's Boy Beagle," wherein Cody and one New York Ned, a tenderfoot learning plainscraft under the scout, go to the rescue of a Union Pacific train, which, stalled in a heavy snowstorm on the Wyoming plains, has been attacked by Cheyennes.

Other new writers who contributed

to the success of the Buffalo Bill Stories were Eugene T. Sawyer, Laurana Sheldon, John H. Whitson, George C. Jenks, W. Bert Foster, and two or three others not easily identified. One of the latter apparently produced all the stories from #212 to 254, excepting #230, "Buffalo Bill's Kiowa Foe," a rewrite about which more will be said later.

W. Bert Foster probably wrote more new tales for this series than anyone else, and certainly some of the best. He began with #282, "Buffalo Bill's Camp Fires" and #283, "Buffalo Bill Up a Stump." His inimitable style appears again in #292, "Buffalo Bill's Medicine Lodge," 293, "Buffalo Bill in Peril," 294, "Buffalo Bill's Strange Pard" and 295, "Buffalo Bill in the Death Desert." Yet again in #300, "Buffalo Bill's Rival" and #301, "Buffalo Bill's Ice Chase."

Apparently the stories from #302 to 334 inclusive are the work of two different authors. One of them, probably, was John H. Whitson, and several are striking tales, such as #318, "Buffalo Bill's Fiery Eye," 319, "Buffalo Bill's Mazeppa Ride," 320, "Buffalo Bill in the Land of Spirits," 325, "Buffalo Bill in Old Mexico" and 331, "Buffalo Bill and the Indian Queen."

Foster contributed no more until #335, "Buffalo Bill's Ghost Dance," an exciting story of the Black Hills at the time of the gold rush, 1876. For 38 successive issues the stories were Foster's, and no better frontier tales have ever been written. #373, "Buffalo Bill's Ranch Riders," 374, "Buffalo Bill's Jade Amulet" and 375, "Buffalo Bill's Magic Lariat" are a series of three by another author, with the scene laid mostly at Buffalo Bill's cattle Ranch in the Big Horn Basin. Some of the action takes place in the then frontier town of Billings, Montana.

W. Bert Foster took up the series again in #376, "Buffalo Bill's 'Paper-talk,'" and wrote the next 12 numbers, up to and including #387, "Buffalo Bill's Kid Pard." In all, he authored about 136 of these tales, and many are worthy of special mention. Mrs. Foster has said that he derived great pleasure from the writing of them. He had a flair for Indian frontier material and was a Buffalo Bill admirer.

It was Foster who introduced Major Gordon W. Lillie (Pawnee Bill) in the

Stories in #481, "Buffalo Bill's Ultimatum, or, Facing Terrors With Pawnee Bill." From this number onward, Pawnee Bill, styled "Prince of the Bowie," was a prominent figure in the series. Since Cody and Lillie were at that time touring the United States with their combined shows, "Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Pawnee Bill's Great Far East," this actual partnership may have suggested to the publishers a joining together of the two famous plainsmen in the Buffalo Bill Stories. From #481 to the last issue, #591, the colored covers carried portraits of Cody and Lillie in a circle at the top.

Calamity Jane (Martha Jane Canary), famous woman gun-toter of Deadwood, appears in #354, "Buffalo Bill's Great Round-up," by Foster. #386, also by Foster, was entitled, "Buffalo Bill and Calamity Jane." This, however, was not the real Calamity, in fact, wasn't a woman at all but a Western detective in female disguise. Foster wrote an interesting series of three with the background of early Utah and the Mormons in #364 to 366 inclusive.

Eugene T. Sawyer carried along the adventures of Cody and pards in #388 "Buffalo Bill's Desperate Flight," and the two succeeding numbers, but it is Foster again in #391, "Buffalo Bill's Guiding Hand," and thereafter for a string of 21 issues. Among them are three tales with much of the action taking place in the famous Maxwell Rancho or its vicinity, being #406 through 408, the first entitled, "Buffalo Bill's Fiesta, or, At Outs With the Duke of Cimarron." The "Duke" was Lucian B. Maxwell, who from trapper and mountain man under Kit Carson rose to be one of the great land-owners of the Southwest. Another historical character in this short series is the celebrated justice of the peace, Judge Roy Bean, of Langtry, Texas. There is also a Texas Kid, and Foster probably had Billy the Kid in mind as the pattern for this character, since Billy Bonney was around that neck of the woods at the period of the stories.

#412, "Buffalo Bill and the Red Feathers," opens a long run of stories by John H. Whitson. No more by Foster until #450, "Buffalo Bill's Secret Message." From that number until #506, "Buffalo Bill's Crow Scouts," the

stories are Foster's without exception. And #506 was his last for the weekly. For over a year this specially gifted author had turned out a Buffalo Bill novel every week (and doubtless some for other Street & Smith libraries at the same time). He could always be counted on for an excellent yarn, and many of these were outstanding. For example, three allied stories concerning a feud among Texas cattlemen in which Cody and pards took sides—#471, "Buffalo Bill and the Cattle Barons," 472, "Buffalo Bill's Long Odds" and 473, "Buffalo Bill, the Peacemaker"; and three others with a land rush setting, #489, "Buffalo Bill and the Boomers," #490, "Buffalo Bill Calls a Halt" and 491, "Buffalo Bill and the Ke-week Totem." All had the atmosphere of the old West, and it was during this long run of tales by Foster that Pawnee Bill made his entry on a buckskin horse named Chick-Chick.

John H. Whitson, another fine writer, wrote #507 through 509, and perhaps several more, but a new author helped to carry on the series for the ensuing 42 weeks, bringing it to #551. In most of these issues the length of the stories was increased by two or three pages. For years they had run 28 pages, about 30,000 words, with four additional pages of short stories, articles, lists of current Street & Smith publications, etc. With #552, "Buffalo Bill and the Border Belle," the weekly began reprinting earlier stories by Colonel Ingraham, giving them new titles and including Pawnee Bill as one of the characters, though he had not appeared in the stories when first written. Between #552 and the last number of the Buffalo Bill Stories, 591, there were just three new and original yarns, #580, "Buffalo Bill and the Apache Dwarfs," 581, "Buffalo Bill and the Red Rattlers" and 582, "Buffalo Bill's Outlaw Allies," probably written by Whitson.

Following is a complete list of stories by W. Bert Foster:

Buffalo Bill Stories #282, 283, 292, 293, 294, 295, 300, 301, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 391,

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 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493,
 494, 495, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502,
 503, 504, 505, 506.

(To be continued)

NEWSY NEWS by Ralph F. Cummings

Have you any old dime or nickel novels, weeklies, libraries or story papers that you prize a lot, and needs a lot of fixing to make it look and last 50 years longer, if so, George Barton, 15 Broomfield St., Lexington 78, Mass. will fix it and others for you, for novels and story papers. Get in touch with him right away. He does a swell

job fellows. He'll make your name in monogram for novels too.

Walter Pannell has moved again, he is now at Alva, Okla.

Albert Johannson says he'd like to make a suggestion but not a criticism. If you intend to issue Indexes hereafter it would be much simpler if you would begin the January number with page 1 and continue the numbers throughout the volume, and not to renumber each issue. Would make references easier. OK. We'll try it out for this year, Pard, and see how it works out.

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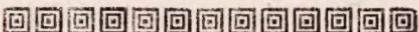
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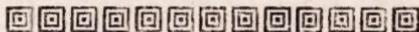
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